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Posada Carriles y el asesinato de Kennedy 12



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CENTERFOLD

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A tale of two trials

EDITORIAL 10



CIA'S TERRORIST

New exposures on Posada Carriles

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Baltimore bus riders pack hearing: 'No transit cuts!'

By Monica Moorehead

On June 13, at least 1,000 outraged people, the majority of them African American, packed a hearing of the Maryland Transit Administration at Baltimore's War Memorial Plaza to protest the MTA's "restructuring" plan.

Working and poor people in the United States have many issues to be angry about: the war in Iraq threatening their youth, the growing income gap between rich and poor, cuts in social services up and down the line, the disappearance of living-wage jobs, the lack of affordable medical care, and a threat to Social Security.

On top of this is police repression, especially in African American, Latino and Native communities, and a general repression against foreigners, especially those from the Middle East and South Asia. (See article on protests over the Baltimore prison guard scandal, page 4.)

So far this growing anger has had few open displays. Some protests in Black communities in Denver, Detroit and Somerville, Mass., have shown that fighting back is possible.

Now the people of Baltimore are facing what could be the last straw: proposed cuts in bus routes.

The MTA's plan proposes to cut long-time, vital bus routes throughout the city. These cuts will impact negatively on workers' ability to get to work on schedule, on youth going to school, and on the elderly and disabled, who need reliable transportation without long waits.

An estimated 52 out of 59 bus routes would be dramatically altered by this plan, which is scheduled to go into effect by Oct. 16. Maryland Gov. Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr., cut \$5 million from the MTA budget in order to build a new highway.

Person after person, numbering in the hundreds, went to the podium to express their anger over this plan and tell how they and their communities would be affected by it. Even the MTA authorities, who often minimize public opposition to their management



WW PHOTO: SHARON BLACK

Hundreds take streets over Central Booking death

Baltimore residents take the streets June 14 to demand justice for Raymond Smoot, killed May 14 by guards while awaiting trial for a minor charge. See page 4.

plans, said that 675 people had signed up to speak by 5 p.m.

Renee Washington and Sharon Black, long-time leaders of the All-Peoples Congress, garnered the most applause. They told the audience and the MTA officials that this hearing should be declared illegal because it was called on short notice. They put forth the demand that the MTA must call new hearings that will allow the workers and the poor to organize to attend and to put forth a united set of demands.

Washington and Black raised the idea of calling a city-wide bus boycott against the MTA, similar to the historic Montgomery bus boycott that was ignited on Dec. 1, 1955, to eliminate segregated buses there. The idea of organizing protests in front of the homes of MTA bosses also brought a roar of approval from the crowd.

When the MTA officials tried to cut off these two women organizers, the crowd told the MTA representatives that they supported their right to speak as long as they wanted to. The crowd joined the APC leaders in a chant of "Shut it down." □

Behind the uprising in BOLIVIA

Sucre, Bolivia, June 13. Workers demand nationalization of natural gas. See page 9.

PHOTO: INDYMEDIA.



Arab political prisoners in U.S. jails

Bogus case against Yemenis unravels

By Charlotte Kates

From Mumia Abu-Jamal to Leonard Peltier, political prisoners are no strangers to U.S. prisons. The so-called “war on terror” has served as a war of terror against the Arab and Muslim communities within the U.S. and abroad. From Guantanamo Bay to Abu Ghraib to immigration detention centers and federal prisons, it has meant the political imprisonment of Arabs and Muslims.

The cause of Palestine has been specifically targeted for persecution.

The case of Sheikh Mohammed al-Moayad and Mohammed Zayad, Yemeni citizens currently imprisoned in the Metropolitan Detention Center in Brooklyn, N.Y., after being kidnapped and brought to the United States, is one of the most egregious examples of the U.S. government’s abuse of the law, human rights and national sovereignty in the name of the “war on terror.”

Al-Moayad and Zayad were humanitarian activists in Yemen. Known as “Father of the Orphans,” al-Moayad established numerous charitable and community institutions, including bakeries that provided food to 9,000 indigent families, schools for boys and girls, medical clinics, computer training centers and mosques in his community in Yemen.

In addition, al-Moayad worked tirelessly for the rights of Palestinians, under occupation and in exile, raising funds to support Palestinian charities—funds that went to establish schools and provide food for Palestinian children. Al-Moayad is well-known and well-respected in Yemeni society, having served in Parliament and held various honorary positions. Mohammed Zayad was his assistant.

Testimony in the case indicated that neither was under any scrutiny by the Yemeni government or, for that matter, the U.S. government, until the appearance in al-Moayad’s life of an informant named Mohamed Alanssi.

Prosecution based on paid informant

Mohamed Alanssi is a Yemeni who came to the United States and became known as a small-scale con artist. Fearing deportation after Sept. 11, 2001, Alanssi saw an opportunity both to regularize his immigration status and to profit financially, the defense committee for al-Moayad and Zayad reports. He offered his services as a confidential informant to the FBI, and gave them the name of a prominent Muslim leader: Sheikh al-Moayad.

Testimony and later press coverage (Washington Post, Nov. 21, 2004, “Informant’s Fire Brings Shadowy Tale”) would reveal that Alanssi made promises of spectacular information concerning millions of dollars in funding to al-Qaeda. He was sent to Yemen, where he ingratiated himself with al-Moayad and Zayad, eventually luring them to Germany by telling them that an American convert to Islam wished to provide a \$2-million donation for their charitable projects.

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WW PHOTO: JOHN CATALINOTTO

In Germany, the man they met—a disguised FBI agent—acted oddly. In FBI recordings of their private conversations, entered into evidence in their trial, al-Moayad and Zayad discussed leaving Germany to return to Yemen. While they were suspicious of their “donor,” they did not know they had walked into an FBI trap.

They were arrested and quickly extradited to the U.S. amid massive publicity and a John Ashcroft press conference heralding the capture of a major funding source for “al-Qaeda.”

Alanssi’s network of lies soon began to collapse. He squandered his initial \$100,000 FBI payoff, then demanded \$5 million for his false testimony about al-Moayad and Zayad.

When the FBI refused, he set himself on fire in front of the White House.

Funds for Palestinian charities only

Without Alanssi’s unsubstantiated and false claims, Ashcroft’s charges soon fell apart. In court, the prosecution presented evidence only that Al-Moayad and Zayad had fund-raised for Palestinian charities, charities the U.S. labeled as “connected to Hamas,” a Palestinian resistance organization—the kinds of charges the U.S. government has used to shut down numerous charities working to help Palestinian children survive.

Fund-raising for Hamas’s charitable wing is entirely legal in Yemen, and also in Germany. Al-Moayad and Zayad had never fund-raised in the United States at all. But now they stood trial under a foreign legal system for supporting Palestinians—which was no crime at all in their homeland.

In the courtroom, the U.S. government’s criminalization of Arabs and Muslims was apparent. One prosecutor, addressing the judge and court reporters, referred to a verse from the Koran as “the terrorist verse.” A Palestinian American lawyer was delayed entry into the case because she was deemed “risky” as a foreign-born U.S. citizen.

The government introduced testimony that al-Moayad’s support for the right to return of Palestinian refugees was a sign of his “extremism.” Its tactics demonized Palestinian resistance in Palestine. A prosecutor cried in court when discussing a Palestinian resistance operation.

Moayad and Zayad were eventually acquitted of supporting al-Qaeda. But they were convicted of supporting Palestinian resistance groups—one of the many charges of “material support” that have been pursued by the U.S. government in its war on the Arab and Muslim communities within the U.S. and abroad, as it attempts to criminalize support for Palestine and terrorize the community into silence.

Al-Moayad and Zayad are currently awaiting sentencing. Community support is essential to seeing that justice is done for these men, for all political prisoners, for Arab and Muslim communities under assault and for Palestine. On May 13, a demonstration was held at the Metropolitan Detention Center. Another is being planned for the day of their sentencing. A longer discussion of the case, as well as a letter to the judge that can be signed in support of al-Moayad and Zayad, can be found at www.al-awdany.org.

Charlotte Kates is an organizer with New Jersey Solidarity—Activists for the Liberation of Palestine as well as Al-Awda NY, the Palestine Right to Return Coalition, which is working to support these prisoners.



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WW CALENDAR

LOS ANGELES Sat., July 16 Brunch & book signing with Leslie Feinberg. Feinberg is a managing editor of WW newspaper and an author Stone Butch Blues, and Trans Liberation, among other works. Sponsored by Workers World Party. 11 a.m.-1 p.m. At 5274 W Pico Blvd, Suite 203. For info (323) 936-1416. Sat., July 16 IAC Forum: Lavender & Red, featuring Leslie Feinberg, lesbian transgender author and activist. 2 p.m. At the Gay & Lesbian Center, Village at Ed Gould Plaza, 1125 N McCadden Pl. (one block E of Highland, N of Santa Monica Blvd). For info (323) 936-7266. NEW YORK Fri., June 17 Workers World Party Meeting: Hear Imani Henry, a WWP leader, on people of color communities & the lesbian/gay/bi/trans struggle, and Leslie Feinberg, transgender lesbian activist & WW managing editor, on the real issues in the Michael Jackson trial. 7 p.m. (Dinner at 6:30) At 55 W. 17 St., 5th Fl., Manhattan. For info (212) 627-2994. Fri., June 24 We invite our Trans and Gender Non-Conforming people of color communities, and our allies, to march with us in the 1st Annual Trans Day of Action for Social and Economic Justice in New York City. Initiated by TransJustice, a project of The Audre Lorde Project, The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Two-Spirit, and Trans People of Color Center for Community Organizing, focusing on the NYC area. 5:30 p.m. gather at Jackson Sq., the intersection of 8th Ave., Greenwich Av, and Horatio St. 6:30 p.m. march to Union Square. 7:30 p.m. rally at Union Square. To endorse or more info phone (718) 596-0342 ext 18.	
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Setback for racist Texas courts

Thomas Miller-El wins new trial

By Gloria Rubac
Houston

In a six-to-three decision on June 13, the U.S. Supreme Court sharply rebuked Texas prosecutors as well as Texas appeals courts, ruling that their excuses for racism in jury selection are unconstitutional.

The conviction of Thomas Miller-El, an African American man sentenced to death in Dallas in 1986, was thrown out. Now—after spending over 19 years on death row—he will be granted a new trial.

Miller-El was within six days of execution in February 2002, when the Supreme Court intervened and gave him a stay of execution. The high court later ordered the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals to re-examine Miller-El's claims that Black people were unfairly struck from his jury.

The 5th Circuit upheld the original Texas court ruling. That led the Supreme Court to review Miller-El's case for a second time, ending in this reversal.

Dorothy Miller-El visited her husband on the day the ruling came down. He told her: "Wow! I've been here for so long, been fighting so hard. Wow! I am so happy that I'm lost for words."

Dorothy Miller-El had left home before the ruling was announced. She got the good news from Thomas Miller-El. He heard it on the radio, and in a phone call from his attorney, Jim Marcus, executive director of the Texas Defenders Service in Houston.

"We are both so happy," Dorothy Miller-El told Workers World. "This ruling sends a strong message that the Texas courts cannot be discriminatory. The Supreme Court will not tolerate racist practices."

"This is not only good for Thomas, but for all those going through the Texas crim-

inal-justice system. Blacks cannot be struck from juries just because they are Black."

She added: "We thank all Thomas's supporters in Texas and around the world for their continued support. It is overwhelming today getting this good news. I've heard from people around the state and so many in Europe."

For years, Thomas Miller-El had contended that the Dallas prosecutor struck 10 of the 11 Black people eligible to be on his jury because of their race.

"There was one Black man on my jury," Miller-El told Workers World in an interview conducted before the Supreme Court's ruling. "He thought the death penalty was too quick. He said that people who commit crimes should be tied down on a bed of red ants and have honey poured on them."

"This was a very inhumane thing to say and it was inhumane for the district attorney to accept a juror who would make such a statement," Dorothy Miller-El said.

Miller-El's brief to the Supreme Court cited a treatise by Dallas County prosecutors in which they had warned against letting "Jews, Negroes, Dagos and Mexicans" serve on juries, no matter how much money they earned.

Another memorandum, dated 1969 and used to train prosecutors, advised, "You are not looking for any member of a minority group—they almost always empathize with the accused."

Shortly after Miller-El's 1986 conviction, the Supreme Court ruled in *Batson vs. Kentucky* that jurors could not be



struck from serving on a jury because of their race. The *Batson* ruling applied retroactively to Miller-El because his case was still being appealed.

Ambushed by racist cops

Miller-El was arrested in November 1985 while visiting his hometown of Houston. He was ambushed by a Houston Police SWAT team, who began shooting him.

Miller-El told WW that as he was lying on the ground bleeding, he could hear one of the cops say: "Is the n—— dead? If he ain't, kill him!"

The bullets shattered his intestines and other internal organs. When he later awoke in a Houston hospital, he found he had been charged with capital murder for the robbery and death of a Dallas motel clerk.

He was in a Houston hospital for 52 days. He had two operations. He was then transferred to the Dallas County Jail, and was tried 19 days later.

Miller-El continued to suffer severe health complications during and after his trial. He was hospitalized several times during the trial, prompting requests for medical evaluations from the trial court.

The judge took away Miller-El's pain medication during the trial and accused him of smuggling drugs into the courtroom. He was left without pain relief, denied necessary sleep, and could not participate in his own defense.

But the trial proceeded without pause. Miller-El suffered complications with his colostomy and infections from the gunshot wound, which was oozing green liq-

uid. He also had pneumonia and was so weak he could barely whisper to his attorneys.

"My court-appointed attorney was running for D.A. in the county election at the time, and he really did not want to talk to me," Miller told Workers World in 1990. "I was so weak that I had to get up real close to him to try to speak with him and he did not like that."

The evening after his conviction, Miller-El was sent to the emergency room at Parkland Hospital, where he was treated for a small-bowel obstruction. He appeared in the courtroom the next morning for sentencing.

Miller-El's case has drawn national and international attention. The NAACP Legal Defense Fund, Common Cause and the League of Women Voters all filed a "friend of the court" briefs. So did several former judges, prosecutors and even a former director of the FBI.

His supporters include political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, noted Spanish filmmaker Javier Corcuero, Spanish pop rock group SKA-P, and Biblioteca Thomas Miller-El in Peru. Supporters in Europe maintain his Web page.

Miller-El's case could play a role in a future Supreme Court nomination battle. Among the federal appeals judges who denied the existence of racism in Dallas County and voted to execute Miller-El was Edith Jones of the 5th Circuit. She is believed to be on a short list of potential Supreme Court nominees if President George W. Bush gets to make a nomination.

Letters of solidarity can be sent to: Thomas Miller-El #000834, Polunsky Unit, 3872 FM 350 South, Livingston, TX 77035. For more background on his case, visit www.thomasmillerel.org. □

Latest legal outrage in Mumia case

Judge plans to reject new hearing

By Monica Moorehead

The Philadelphia-based Pennsylvania Court of Common Pleas released a 18-page document on May 27 stating its intent to dismiss a legal motion filed by lawyers representing death-row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal for a new Post Conviction Relief Act (PCRA) hearing. The request for a PCRA hearing was originally made on Dec. 8, 2003.

This state appeals court has given Abu-Jamal's lawyers until June 16 to file a "reconsideration" legal brief challenging its May 27 response. If the Abu-Jamal June 16 "reconsideration" petition is also rejected, his lawyers plan to appeal to the Pennsylvania State Supreme Court.

The request for a PCRA hearing stems from the fact that Mumia Abu-Jamal was falsely convicted in 1982 in a sham trial for the shooting-death of a white police officer, Daniel Faulkner, on Dec. 9, 1981. The trial was severely tainted by a conspiracy to suppress evidence that would substantiate Abu-Jamal's innocence, as well as the outright political demonization of Abu-Jamal by the prosecutor. Twenty-nine constitutional rights violations have been documented during a trial that culminated in a predominantly white jury sentencing Abu-Jamal to death.

Back in December 2001, Federal District Judge William Yohn overturned

Abu-Jamal's sentence of death but not the first-degree murder conviction. Yohn cited one of the constitutional rights violations in his ruling.

Abu-Jamal's attorneys appealed Yohn's ruling, stating that spending the rest of his life in prison was unacceptable. Life imprisonment was the only other option Yohn raised in his ruling. The Philadelphia district attorney's office also appealed the Yohn ruling, hoping to bring back the death penalty for Abu-Jamal.

Abu-Jamal still sits on death row in the SCI-Greene prison unit.

Philly cops targeted Abu-Jamal

It is no secret that the Philadelphia Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) had been targeting Abu-Jamal—an African-American journalist, former Black Panther and MOVE supporter—for his outspoken writings on the rampant police brutality that tarnished the image of the "city of brotherly love," especially during the 1970s under Mayor Frank Rizzo's regime.

The judge during Abu-Jamal's original trial, Albert Sabo, was a racist and a card-carrying member of the FOP. He was overheard by a white stenographer, Terri Maurer Carter, stating in regard to Abu-Jamal that he was going to "help fry the n——r."

Judge Pamela Dembe, who wrote the May 27 ruling, also stated in her intent to

dismiss Abu-Jamal's request for a hearing that even if Sabo had actually made the racist comment against Abu-Jamal raised by Carter in her deposition, it did not prove that his decisions were affected by this expressed intention. How outrageous!

At PCRA hearings in 1982 and 1996, the defense attempted to present suppressed evidence of witnesses who were coerced into lying on the stand against Abu-Jamal during the original trial, and to allow their testimony to finally be heard. The goal of a PCRA hearing is to lead to a new and fair trial to finally win the freedom of Abu-Jamal.

What Judge Dembe has done in the May 27 ruling is attempt to uphold every unjust ruling that came down under Sabo. Every legal argument Abu-Jamal's lawyers made that points to his innocence was declared "untimely" by Dembe. The main argument Dembe made against the Dec. 8, 2003, legal brief was based on violation of time guidelines.

Such guidelines stem from the Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act, which upholds state rulings and closes off the re-examination of any evidence of innocence where prisoners' appeals are concerned. Bill Clinton signed this act into law in 1996.

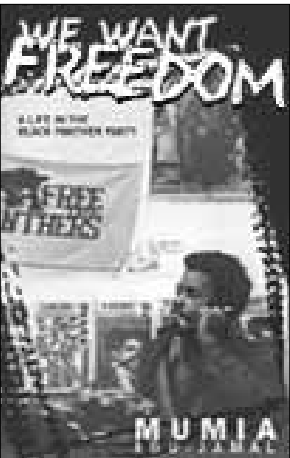
This latest legal development is one in a long list of legal setbacks within the political struggle to free Mumia Abu-Jamal.

The legal dismissals that have occurred in the state and federal courts masked the real objectives of the U.S. government: to silence Abu-Jamal's revolutionary voice with the death penalty or life in prison.

Abu-Jamal has faced two death warrants. Both ended in a stay of execution due to mass pressure inside the U.S. and worldwide.

International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal and their supporters have called for a day of emergency protest and outreach on June 16 in Philadelphia to expose this latest legal injustice. For more information, call ICFFMAJ at (215) 476-8812 or visit millions4mumia.org on the web. □

Cover of Mumia Abu-Jamal's book on the Black Panther Party shows him working in BPP office at age 16.



Order at online at www.Leftbooks.com

Hundreds take streets to demand justice for Raymond Smoot

By Sharon Black
Baltimore

On the evening of June 14, hundreds of community activists and youth, African American and white, took over the streets surrounding Baltimore's gigantic jail complex, which stretches for blocks. They chanted "Tear down the walls!" and "Tell the truth, stop the lies, Raymond Smoot didn't have to die."

Smoot was a prisoner in Baltimore's Central Booking jail, which was built to process the many arrestees waiting for arraignment. On May 14 he was beaten to death by dozens of guards. While no guards have been charged yet with this death, it is considered a homicide. On June 10, eight guards were fired for their activities on the night he died.

Prison authorities are attempting to blame the actions of individual guards, rather than the repressive system that creates these conditions, for the many deaths and injuries in Central Booking.

Following a rally outside Central Booking, protesters marched for over an hour in record heat and briefly blocked traffic along the busy Greenmount Avenue corridor. They carried coffins and pictures along with banners and signs. Prisoners cheered from behind bars at the Eager Street section of City Jail.

The demonstration was called to protest both the brutal beating death of 52-year-old Smoot and growing police harassment and arrests in the community, along with abusive conditions at all of the city's jails.

The city has adopted a policy of "zero tolerance," which translates into mass arrests for the most minor infractions of the law. Police are given quotas of arrests they must meet. In this city of 650,000 people, there have been 100,000 arrests a year. Over the past three years, an average of more than one person a month has died while being held in Central Booking.

Calls for justice and unity

Donnetta Kidd, Smoot's niece, spoke at an initial rally in front of Central Booking. Close to tears, she explained that the family wanted justice for all the victims. The crowd cheered her and urged her to continue.

Smoot's family members have been actively seeking justice for the victim and organizing among their friends and the general community. Other relatives of victims of both police killings and of the jail system have come forth publicly to speak and organize. Some spoke at the rally, among them relatives of Joey Wilbon, who was beaten to death by Baltimore city police, and the sister and brother of Debby Epifanio, who died



WW PHOTO: SHARON BLACK

Baltimore, June 14. Speaking is Minna Reese, sister of Debbie Epifanio, who died when denied medicine at Central Booking in Baltimore.

when she was denied medicines.

Daren Muhammad, an organizer for the rally and march and a leader with the Nation of Islam, called for unity. He indicted the system. "If you are poor, you are locked up. Being poor shouldn't be a crime." Muhammad is also a radio commentator for the "Final Analysis."

Andre Powell of the All Peoples Congress exclaimed, "What we have

accomplished tonight is amazing. Unity has brought together a diverse coalition of victims of police and jail abuse, their families, young and old, and all of the major community organizations."

Students from local colleges also attended, along with youth who identify with anarchism, the Green Party, the NAACP and many other groups and individuals. □

Frank Wills 'blew the whistle' on Watergate

By Stephen Millies

Ex-CIA agent James McCord didn't think he would be stopped from installing wiretaps at Democratic National Committee headquarters by an \$80-per-week security guard. Neither did fellow Watergate burglar Bernard Barker, a former member of CIA-backed Cuban dictator Fulgencio Batista's secret police.

On June 17, 1972, Frank Wills, an African American worker, was making his rounds on the graveyard shift at the Watergate buildings when he sounded the alarm about the break-in.

"I put my life on the line. I went out of my way," Wills told a Boston Globe

reporter on the 25th anniversary of Watergate. "If it wasn't for me, Woodward and Bernstein would not have known anything about Watergate."

Journalists Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein got \$5 million from the University of Texas in 2003 for their Watergate notebooks and files. Frank Wills didn't even get a pension.

He died penniless in an Augusta, Ga., hospital of a brain tumor on Sept. 27, 2000.

Wills couldn't afford to bury his mother. He lived in a house without lights because he wasn't able to pay the electric bill.

Wills found it hard to get a job after Watergate. One Washington area university told Wills they were afraid to hire him for fear their federal funds might be cut.

Frank Wills moved back to his home state of Georgia after his mother suffered a stroke. They lived together on her \$450 monthly Social Security check.

Richard Nixon's face is on a postage stamp. He and his fellow war criminal Henry Kissinger made millions of dollars

off their memoirs.

President Nixon's partner in crime, Vice President Spiro Agnew, got three years' probation for evading taxes on bribes filched from highway contractors. Frank Wills was sentenced to a year in jail in 1983 for allegedly trying to shoplift a \$12 pair of sneakers.

A victim of racial profiling, Wills wasn't arrested while leaving the store. He was nabbed just for putting the shoes in his bag. He'd wanted to surprise a friend with his gift at the check-out counter.

Frank Wills epitomizes the plight of hundreds of thousands of low-paid security guards today, many of whom are African American. Increased employment in this field has gone hand in hand with the growing army of janitors. Growth of both jobs is a result of the office building construction boom.

Service Employees Local 1877 is trying to organize 10,000 guards in Los Angeles.



Frank Wills

Union supporters staged a sit-in at the Wells Fargo Tower there last September. Several months later, with the support of Dr. King's Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the union marched through downtown Los Angeles.

This important struggle came out of the union's

"Justice for Janitors" campaign. At one of the early actions by this campaign, on June 15, 1990, Los Angeles cops viciously attacked Service Employees members demanding a union contract at the Century City office complex. At least 148 workers were injured, including a pregnant woman who miscarried.

Despite this police riot, janitors at Century City have a union today. These overwhelmingly Latin@ janitors, 98 percent of whom are immigrants, are in solidarity with efforts by security guards, predominantly Black, to be unionized too. □

Fort Mill, S.C.

Warehouse workers walk

Nearly 200 workers at Northern Tool & Equipment Co. in Fort Mill, S.C., went on strike the afternoon of June 9. Teamsters had been working without a contract since January and demanded better pay, benefits and working conditions.

The final straw broke June 9 when the temperature in the warehouse hit 120 degrees Fahrenheit due to management's refusal to fix the ventilation.

The company called in 29 cops from Fort Mill and surrounding areas. Ernest Wrenn of Teamsters Local 71 said the company was trying to scare people. Workers said they would not be intimidated.

Ted Russell, president of the local, told the Charlotte Observer: "They treat these people like dogs. They're still trying to get away with that."

The strike ended 24 hours later when a meeting was set up between the union, management and a federal mediator for the following week.

—David Dixon



Picket line defends Starbucks workers

Over 70 people from various organizations of workers and pro-union groups picketed the Starbucks coffee shop at First Avenue and 17th Street in New York's borough of Manhattan June 4 in defense of Starbucks worker Sara Bender, fired for her organizing efforts. Workers at the coffee shop are attempting to get union recognition and have appealed to the International Workers of the World, or IWW, a group that identifies with the original anarcho-syndicalist IWW of the period before the 1920s. Among the usual chants like "No union, no peace," one could also hear some Starbucks-specific cries of "No union, no latté" and tongue-in-cheek demands for a "50-cent cup of coffee." Among those supporting the Starbucks workers was a contingent from the local Million Worker March organization.

—Story and photo by Anne Pruden

'Troops Out Now' holds unity meeting

By Workers World New York bureau

Activists from across the U.S. representing many antiwar, progressive and labor organizations assembled here June 11 for a discussion of strategy and unity in the antiwar movement.

The gathering at the Lang Center of New School University, called by the Troops Out Now Coalition (TONC), showed a growing momentum among activists for a united front against the war in Iraq.

As TONC pointed out in a statement, polls indicate that "the majority of people in the U.S. now oppose the occupation, recruiting numbers are at an all-time low, and Bush's approval ratings are falling. This growing opposition can have tremendous impact when it is manifested in the streets."

On May 26, TONC had issued a call for massive, unified action to stop the war. This call has gathered nearly 1,000 endorsers in the days since it was circulated. The coalition believes this reflects "a widespread recognition that the antiwar movement needs to enter a new phase of struggle," and that this recognition was evident in the June 11 meeting, where over 200 representatives gathered to discuss the next steps in the antiwar struggle.

"Those taking part in the discussion were enthusiastic, serious and respectful of each other," says TONC.

At the first session, some of the TONC leaders outlined the coalition's approach to the struggle for a united front demonstration on Sept. 24. Speaking were Larry Holmes of the International Action Center (IAC), Brenda Stokely of the New York Committee Against the War and the Million Worker March, Dustin Langley of No Draft No Way, and Berna Ellorin of BAYAN USA.



WW PHOTOS: G. DUNKEL
Brenda Stokely, NYCLAW & MWM; Larry Holmes, IAC; Berna Ellorin, BAYAN USA.



TONC's positions affirmed

The issues raised were discussed in workshops and then brought back to another plenary meeting for discussion. In one of those reports, Teresa Gutierrez of NY Committee to Free the Five told of her recent trip to Cuba and the need for the U.S. movement to act in solidarity with Cuba and Venezuela and to defend all of Latin America against U.S. intervention.

The gathering affirmed TONC's proposals and positions, including:

- The vital importance of building a united front against the war. TONC emphasized building a large, militant antiwar movement that is capable of stopping the war. It renewed its appeal to the forces in the antiwar movement who have refused to work together for the fall and beyond to "reverse their positions and help unleash the full mass potential of the struggle to shut the war down."
- That building a united movement means including, not excluding, the struggles of oppressed people. It affirmed support for the right of all Palestinian refugees and their descendants to return to their original homes and property in all of historic Palestine.
- That unity means "much more than organizational unity. It means, more importantly, that the antiwar movement

reach out to and embrace the struggles of oppressed people here and internationally. It means solidarity with the struggle of communities of color, with LGBT communities, with immigrants, and with struggles against racism, sexism and all forms of oppression. It means solidarity with the people of Iraq, Palestine, Haiti, the Philippines, and everywhere that people are struggling against U.S. colonial occupation."

- That the antiwar movement needs to look to new and more effective tactics to stop the war. Activists raised the slogan "Troops home now, or we'll shut it down!" and discussed the idea of declaring a moratorium against the war, including walkouts, civil disobedience and other direct actions to bring the cities to a stop until the war is ended.

1,000 protest U.S. policies at OAS

By David Hoskins

When the 35th General Assembly of the Organization of American States opened June 5 at the Fort Lauderdale Convention Center in Florida, over 1,000 protesters marched two miles from a local union hall to the convention center in defense of three countries under attack by U.S. imperialism.

The United States repeatedly threatened Cuba, Haiti and Venezuela throughout the three-day assembly. Cuba is the only state in the Americas denied a seat in the OAS.

The Haiti Solidarity Committee, in conjunction with a number of progressive organizations, called the demonstration to protest Washington's military and trade policies in Latin America and the Caribbean. The Bolivarian Circle of Miami, Broward Anti-War Committee, and the Committee to Free the Five Cuban Heroes also endorsed the actions.

Protesters shouted slogans demanding President Jean-Bertrand Aristide's return to office in Haiti, the extradition of terrorist Luis Posada Carriles to Venezuela, and defeat of the Bush administration's "free trade" program for Central America, called CAFTA.

Jack Lieberman of the HSC demanded that the OAS "live up to its rhetoric and refuse to seat the criminals who are here claiming to represent Haiti." These remarks came in response to OAS recognition of the interim Haiti regime.

Lieberman further castigated the Bush administration: "Condoleezza Rice goes around Latin America talking empty phrases about freedom and democracy while she supports terrorism in Haiti. We say to Condoleezza Rice and George Bush, you are hypocrites."

As protesters voiced their disillusionment with Washington's policies outside the convention center, rancorous disputes between Washington and progressive Latin American administrations emerged

- That the struggle to end the war will be won by mobilizing a massive movement in the streets. The conference concluded that "Counting on elections and pro-war politicians to end the war is, at best, a misdirection of time, energy and resources. Only the people will stop the war. To that end, it is important to immediately begin planning and mobilizing now for the Sept. 24 march in Washington, D.C., the Millions More Movement events on the weekend of Oct. 14-16, and the Moratorium Against the War."

Other speakers and participants in the discussion, representing many different struggles and organizations, included:

Nana Soul of Artists & Activists United for Peace; Charlotte Kates of Al-Awda NY & NJ Solidarity-Activists for the Liberation of Palestine; Jesse Lokahi Heiwa of Queers for Peace & Justice & Queers for Palestine; Lee Siu Hin, an organizer with ActionLA; Sara Flounders of the IAC; Carl Webb, a member of the Army National Guard who refused to deploy to Iraq; Nellie Bailey of Harlem Tenants Council; LeiLani Dowell of Fight Imperialism, Stand Together (FIST) and Queers for Peace & Justice; Paul Zulkowitz of Green Party Peace Action Committee; and Hadas Their of Campus Antiwar Network, who was arrested earlier this year for protesting against military recruiters at the CUNY. □

Medical marijuana

Supreme Court okays witch-hunt of sick people

By Larry Hales

On June 6, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that federal authorities can prosecute chronically ill patients who have been prescribed marijuana for medical use. The six-to-three decision is a blow to those who have fought for legalization of medical marijuana. Ten states currently allow doctors to prescribe marijuana for pain relief in patients suffering debilitating illnesses.

The ruling came after the Bush administration appealed the case of two ailing women in California, Angel Raich and Diane Monson, who were prescribed marijuana for medical use. The women now fear federal prosecution. California voters passed a law providing for medical use of the plant back in 1996.

Raich suffers from a number of painful ailments, including scoliosis, a brain tumor, chronic nausea and fatigue. She says that she was unable to walk until she began using marijuana.

Monson suffers from a degenerative spine disease. Federal agents confiscated marijuana plants from her home in 2002.

What's rarely discussed in the corporate media's coverage of the case is that pharmaceutical companies continue to squeeze the uninsured and underinsured, leaving people to fend for themselves.

Pharmaceuticals companies have been reaping huge profits. Prescription drugs

are an ever-increasing part of health-care costs. U.S. residents spend over \$200 billion a year on them.

Prescription medications often have side effects that many patients can't endure. But since pharmaceutical companies care purely about profit, there is little incentive for them to develop less harmful medications.

With the rising cost of insurance premiums and prescription medications, few options remain for those enduring chronic pain.

Marijuana is a relatively low-cost alternative in those states that have legalized its use for medical purposes. Some patients can tolerate its side effects better than those of other pain drugs.

At last count, some 47 million people in the United States go without health care. Millions more are under-insured and can't afford medication when needed. This amounts to genocide in poor communities of color, where people often die from lack of health care.

Yet there are no rumblings about this crisis in the halls of "justice." Nor are bourgeois politicians waging a struggle to right this wrong.

Instead, the war to criminalize the poor—known as the "War on Drugs"—is being expanded to include the very ill, who use marijuana for a short respite from chronic pain. □

Mattachine: unmasking a 'masked

By Leslie Feinberg

"We sat there, with fire in our eyes and far-away dreams, *being* Gays." That's how Harry Hay described the first meeting on Nov. 11, 1950, of what would become the Mattachine movement.

The five founders—Harry Hay, Rudi Gernreich, Dale Jennings, Chuck Rowland and Bob Hull—formed a leadership core that met weekly. They took seriously the historic task of building what they hoped would become a homosexual emancipation movement.

Hay stressed that at the start of their organizing they "felt that if we made bad mistakes and ruined the thing it might be many, many years before the attempt to organize Gay people would be tried again. So we had to do it right, if possible. That's why we operated by unanimity and were very slow moving." ("Gay American History")

Social oppression leveled against same-sex love and gender variance was so great, and political repression was becoming such an audible drumbeat, that the task appeared daunting.

One Mattachine founder explained to Stuart Timmons, Hay's biographer, "It was dramatic because anyone in the early fifties who was gay had a strange feeling of fear. Everyone had experienced something. For instance, picture walking into a bar you'd been going to for some time, not a gay bar but one where gay people had been welcome to drink. Drinks were a quarter there, but one day the bartender says, 'That'll be a dollar to you.' You'd realize with a shock that he didn't want you there. That's a minor example."

Timmons added, "The laws and customs of the era were stringently anti-homosexual; in California, as in most states, any sexual act except the missionary position between a heterosexual couple was a crime punishable by up to 20 years in prison. Anyone caught doing anything else could be made to register as a sex offender. Repeat offenders and those whose partners were minors were often sent to Atascadero state prison and given electroshock 'therapy,' or even subjected to castration. Since any public mention of homosexuality was equated with scandal, few workplaces would retain an employee whose involvement with such an organization became public." ("The Trouble with Harry Hay")

As the Mattachine founders met to discuss organizing, the "Lavender Scare" was becoming a sensationalized propaganda component of the McCarthyite anti-communist witch hunt. The Senate was making public its report rooting out "sexual perverts" from government employment.

The deep-freeze Cold War climate was meant to have a chilling effect on all progressive and revolutionary organizing. And the Mattachine founders, as young revolutionaries, understood the powers of the state that the capitalist class could unleash. They were well-aware that the German Homosexual Emancipation Movement and communists were early targets of the Nazi state capitalist regime.

Gernreich had been forced to flee fascism in Vienna. Jennings had worked to defend Japanese-Americans detained in

U.S. internment camps during World War II. Anti-communism had forced Rowland out of his job as an organizer with the American Veterans Committee.

"Above all, Hay was acutely conscious of the growing climate of repression. With much of his party work centered on cultural activities, he was aware of the targeting of leftists in Hollywood by the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC). California, moreover, had its own anti-communist investigating committee whose head, Jack Tenney, came from Los Angeles, and which held highly publicized hearings throughout the postwar years. The two organizations in which Hay was most active, People's Songs and the People's Educational Center, had already come under its scrutiny." ("Making Trouble," John D'Emilio)

This inhospitable political environment shaped the organizational form of Mattachine—the first sustained gay liberation organization in the United States.

Clandestine organizing

Hay revised his original 1948 plan for an above-ground "Bachelors for Wallace" model of political organizing. Instead, he proposed an underground organization.

"The first thing we did was set up a semipublic-type discussion group," Hay explained to interviewer Jonathan Katz, "so you didn't have to reveal yourself if you didn't want to. Only certain persons would be invited at first, but later they'd be invited to ask some friends." ("Gay American History")

Katz asked Hay where the idea of the underground organization came from. Hay replied, "In July 1950, I was still a well-sought-after teacher of Marxist principles, both in the Communist party and the California Labor School. I was teaching a course in music history at the Labor School, and was dealing with the Guild System and the Freemasonry movement, particularly at the time of [Austrian Hapsburg Queen] Maria Teresa, when to be a member of the Freemasonry was to court the death sentence. Both Mozart and Haydn had been Freemasons, courting punishment.

"This is also the way the Communist party had moved as a political organization in 1930-37, when it had been truly underground. I thought of the Freemason movement and the type of Communist underground organization that had existed in the 1930s, which I had known and been part of.

"So I began to work up the structure specified in the prospectus from the old left and, interestingly, was not too different from that structure employed by Algeria in its successful liberation struggle with France in the sixties."

Hay described how his thinking had changed in the two years since he'd written his original 1948 prospectus for homosexual organizing. "At first I had not been so concerned with planting the organization underground. The goals and ideology never changed particularly; I felt that what we had to do was to find out who we were, and that what we were for would follow. I realized that we had been very contributive in various ways over the millennia, and I felt we could return to being contributive again. Then we could be respected for our difference, not for our samenesses to heterosexuals. To a large extent that's what the whole movement was about.

"The 1948 prospectus outlined the basic idea. The 1949 version described how we would set up the guilds, how we would keep them underground and separated so that no one group could ever know who all the other members were and their anonymity would be secured."

The founding members created a centralized organization with five levels—known as "orders"—of leadership, "with increasing levels of responsibility as one ascended the structure and with each order having one or two representatives from a higher order of the organization," wrote historian John D'Emilio.

"As the membership of the Mattachine Society grew, the orders were expected to subdivide into separate cells so that each layer of the pyramid could expand horizontally. As the number of cells increased, members of the same order but in different cells would be largely unknown to one another." ("Sexual Politics")

'A masked people'

Hay described the first organizational attempts. "We talked about the prospectus of the foundation, made our contacts with a fighting lawyer, who had defended one of us in court on a Gay charge, applied for a preliminary charter for a nonprofit corporation, and began (as of late November 1950) to have our discussion groups." ("Gay American History")

In the spring of 1951, the leadership core—the "fifth order"—formally changed the interim name of the organization from "Society of Fools" to the Mattachine Society.

"One of the cultural developments I had discussed and illustrated in my Labor School class on 'Historical Materialist Development of Music' was the function of the medieval-Renaissance French Sociétés Joyeux," Hay recalled. "One was known as the Société Mattachine. These societies, lifelong secret fraternities of unmarried townsmen who never performed in public unmasked, were dedicated to going out into the countryside and conducting dances and rituals during the Feast of Fools, at the Vernal Equinox.

"Sometimes these dance rituals, or masques, were peasant protests against oppression—with the maskers, in the people's name, receiving the brunt of a given lord's vicious retaliation.

"So we took the name Mattachine because we felt that we 1950s Gays were also a masked people, unknown and anonymous, who might become engaged in morale building and helping ourselves and others, through struggle, to move toward total redress and change."

Fear of police raids, Timmons emphasized, required that the Mattachine founders meet in secret. "When the occasional guest was invited, it was a standard security process for him to meet a Mattachine member at some public landmark, then to be driven around for a few blocks before being taken to the meeting place."

Rowland said, "We did not want to lead the police to our meetings, so we did not give guests the address." They changed locations regularly and kept the shades and curtains drawn—men meeting together in one room would appear suspicious.

Timmons added, "Because they had read that telephones could be used to bug a room, Rowland always put the phone in a dresser drawer and put a pillow over it. When people left the meetings, they kept their voices down."

'People were able to bloom'

In April 1951, Konrade Stevens and James Gruber became the last new members of the fifth order—affectionately dubbed "Parsifal," after the operatic knights on a quest to find the Holy Grail.

Neither Stevens nor Gruber had any experience with communism or knowledge of Marxism. After several months of meetings, Gruber related, "We would

meet in various homes, and once, when we met at Chuck and Bob's, I was sitting on the couch and innocently picked up a newspaper. It was the Daily Worker. I thought it was a gag and made some sort of funny reference to it. Bob just took the paper. He didn't find it funny."

When other founding members took the opportunity to talk about their communist beliefs and activism, they discovered that neither Stevens nor Gruber proved to be very anti-communist.

The fifth-order founder drafted the "Missions and Purposes" of Mattachine in April 1951 and ratified them on July 20. The stated goals were as follows:

"To unify" homosexuals who were "isolated from their own kind," and to create a principle from which "all our people can ... derive a feeling of belonging."

"To educate" all of society—homosexual and heterosexual alike, by developing an "ethical homosexual culture ... paralleling the emerging cultures of our fellow-minorities—[African American], Mexican, and Jewish Peoples."

"To lead," providing leadership of more "socially conscious homosexuals" to the whole mass of the homosexual population.

The goals included the "imperative" need for "political action" against "discriminatory and oppression legislation." And they concluded with the need to assist "our people who are victimized daily as a result of our oppression," terming this group "one of the largest minorities in [North] America today." ("Gay American History")

By summer of 1951, the number of discussion groups began to grow. The first participants were drawn from those courageous enough to sign the anti-Korean War petition Hay and Gernreich had circulated on southern California gay beaches. ("The Rise of a Gay and Lesbian Movement")

The fifth-order group drew up a questionnaire to facilitate the discussion about first-hand experience with discrimination or encounters with police and courts, meeting sexual partners and going to bars, and coming out to family and co-workers.

"Few participants had ever before been asked such questions systematically, and the questionnaire fueled extended discussions," historian John D'Emilio explained. "Group members speculated on causes of homosexuality, reasons for social hostility to it, and where sexual 'deviants' could lead well-adjusted lives. They described the pain of discovering their sexual identities and the surrounding tragedies, as well as the strengths that survival in a hostile society had produced. Together they imagined how life might be different, how a gay subculture might emerge to provide emotional sustenance, and how homosexuals and lesbians might act to change social attitudes." ("Sexual Politics")

Hay noted, "The meetings were mostly male. A few women came and protested that they were not included, and after that more women came."

At first, Mattachine leaders adopted noms de guerre. Rudi Gernreich was referred to as "X" or "R"; his role in Mattachine was not revealed until after his death.

Those who took part in the discussion groups were "petrified that the government might get a list" of participants and feared that "the cops would come barging in and arrest everybody." ("Sexual Politics")

"But as time passed and no raids materialized, men and women dropped their defenses, friendships formed, and the meetings took on the character of intimate gatherings," D'Emilio continued.

James Gruber described the experience: "All of us had known a whole lifetime of not talking, or repression. Just the free-



PART 38

Read why the Pentagon declared war on lesbians & gays

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d people'

dom to open up ... really, that's what it was all about. We had found a sense of belonging, of camaraderie, of openness in an atmosphere of tension and distrust. ... Such a great deal of it was a social climate. A family feeling came out of it, a nonsexual emphasis. ... It was a brand-new idea."

Geraldine Jackson, who became active in Mattachine, said that "people were able to bloom and be themselves. ... [It] was something we didn't know before." She added that, finally, there was the chance to "say what you wanted to say and feel accepted."

She concluded, "You felt that you were doing something terribly worthwhile for our people."

Next: Impact of Black civil rights struggle on pre-Stonewall gay liberation.



Some 700 took part in this year's D.C. Dyke March, chanting against racism, sexism and anti-LGBT bigotry.

PHOTO:AL MINER

D.C. Dyke March: Thinking outside the boxes

By Minnie Bruce Pratt

The annual Washington, D.C., Dyke March on June 11 celebrated 12 years of radical lesbian defiance with a rally and march of some 700 people.

The crowd was predominantly young lesbian women, with noticeable participation from D.C.'s African American lesbian community. There was also a solid showing of gay non-trans men, including the supportive local chapter of Radical Faeries; a large contingent from the local lesbian and gay Deaf community; members of the local bisexual women's group; representatives from the D.C. Drag Kings troupe; and many transgender people, including some from the National Center for Transgender Equality.

The tradition of an LGBT Pride Month "dyke march" began on the eve of the 1993 March on Washington for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Equal Rights and Liberation. That night more than 20,000 people poured into the streets to advance without a parade permit, defying state restrictions. There are now more than a dozen annual Dyke Marches in North America.

The 2005 D.C. march theme was "Thinking Outside the Boxes." Organizers said this year's Dyke March specifically welcomed people of all identities in order to emphasize that, "Every day folks along the queer spectrum are embracing and inventing new ways of describing their identities, including ways of honoring shifting and multiple identities."

The organizing committee, chaired by Al Miner—who identifies as a "Jewish tranny" and a "primarily masculine and gender-queer person"—mirrored this commitment to diversity. Miner noted that the all-volunteer members include

Shana McDavis-Conway, an African American bisexual; Joy Hunt, a white lesbian who works for the Advocacy Institute; Siedeh Rezaei-Kamalabad, an Arab American college student and drag king; Jen Halpern, a white lesbian; Natalie Illum, a differently abled poet and activist; and Sarah Glaubinger, who identifies as gender-queer.

Marshals for the march were trained by Marty Langelan, a nationally recognized expert on violence against women and a former president of the D.C. Rape Crisis Center. Marshals included Jaya Karla, a 17-year-old Indian American student who is interning at the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force.

Stacey Long addressed the crowd before the march began. Long talked about her partner Wanda Alston, an African American lesbian who was tragically killed in March. Alston had served as D.C. Mayor Anthony Williams's special assistant on LGBT affairs and as head of the recently created Office for LGBT Affairs.

Long spoke of how Wanda had been an activist passionately committed to the movements for civil rights, women's liberation and LGBT rights. Long called on all who were gathered together at the march to continue the struggle in the spirit of Wanda's activism.

'Rage and pride!'

Leslie Feinberg, transgender lesbian activist and a managing editor of Workers World newspaper, recalled the lessons for today of the 1969 Stonewall Rebellion. She pointed out that Stonewall was made by people with many different identities, including multiple oppressions: Black, Latin@, white, homeless street youth, sex workers, transgender, gay, lesbian, bisex-

ual, transsexual. She emphasized that these individuals, who did not face a common oppression, made history when they fought back together, shoulder to shoulder, against police repression.

Feinberg said that the difference between Stonewall and today is the potential for a broader class-wide struggle. The 1960s Vietnam War years were a period of economic upturn based on military spending. The government "guns and butter" social programs and higher levels of employment made it easier to isolate the liberation movements and student struggles.

"Today," Feinberg said, "there's no butter, there's no margarine, there's just guns. The cities are being starved to pay for endless billions for war that both aisles of Congress are approving. The overall standard of living is declining and access to jobs, health care, education and affordable housing are scarce. So in order to wage the broadest, most diverse struggle against capitalism and its wars for global empire, we have to unite to fight against all forms of oppression."

The crowd cheered Feinberg's call to support the right of the Iraqi people to resist imperialist occupation and the demand to bring the GIs home now. They roared in response to her call for unity in the struggle against the military draft, racism and sexism and vocally vowed to fight for the rights of Muslim, Arab and South Asian immigrants and Deaf and disabled communities.

Organizer Al Miner, who first heard Feinberg speak at a conference sponsored

by Al-Fatiha, an organization of LGBT, intersex and questioning Muslims, said that Feinberg's anti-corporate message was also important to the march. Miner added the committee invited Feinberg because they wanted someone who could appeal across generational lines, and who embodied the message that multiple identities and diversities are to be celebrated, not swept under the rug.

Miner said of the D.C. Dyke March, "It is with rage and pride that we make as much noise as we can, not only for our own rights but for other groups who so often get left behind. We don't have a permit, we're not a 501.C.3 organization, we wouldn't want to be—we don't need support from a government that murders people in the name of patriotism."

Miner added, "I don't give a damn how hard a sell it may be to garner rights for Muslims or transfolks or whoever—when any group has their basic civil rights withheld, we all suffer. This year's march theme is to remind our community of just that."

Miner wants the political theme of this year's D.C. Dyke March to have a far-reaching impact: "I hope everyone who came to the march will go back to their own organizations or communities and share that message of inclusion—and that includes other dyke marches. It's so simple: Why not include everyone? There is strength in numbers, after all."

As a lesbian activist, Pratt worked for 10 years in D.C. to connect the struggles against racism, LGBT oppression and imperialism.

Los Angeles LGBT Pride March

The theme for this year's Christopher Street West LGBT Pride Parade in Los Angeles was "How do you wear your pride."

Participants wore it well. And not to be outdone, the International Action Center in Los Angeles decorated their float in a sea of color and political slogans like "Money for AIDS research, not war" and "Equal marriage rights now."

IAC members chanted: "Gay, straight, Black, white—all unite to fight the right!"

The IAC contingent had to be one of the best received. People were especially receptive to chants for unity and solidarity and demands to stop the war and bring the troops home.

Thousands of fliers were also passed out publicizing Leslie Feinberg's arrival to Los Angeles on July 16 where s/he will be speaking at an IAC forum, book signing and Workers World brunch.

—John Parker



WW PHOTO: SEKOU PARKER

Pat Chin second from left holding the banner.



Join us to celebrate the life of PAT CHIN

A memorial celebrating the life of Workers World Party leader Pat Chin will be held on Saturday, June 25, from 3 to 6 p.m. at the Lang Center, 55 W. 13 St., 2nd floor, in Manhattan in New York City. Chin, a lesbian activist of color, died on May 16 at the age of 56 after a long bout with breast cancer.

The memorial will honor her exemplary contributions to the revolutionary struggle. Representatives of important struggles will be in attendance, including from the Haitian movement, as well as members of Pat's family, her friends, and political activists she met during her long history in the struggle.

Call (212) 627-2994 for more information about the memorial and about how to contribute to the Pat Chin Memorial Fund.

As Posada Carriles protests spread

More evidence emerges on CIA terrorism

By Deirdre Griswold

Even as protests were taking place around the world demanding the U.S. government fulfill its extradition treaty with Venezuela and return anti-Cuba terrorist Luis Posada Carriles there for trial, a research institute in Washington was releasing CIA documents with more chilling details about his murderous career.

Posada Carriles has been wanted in Venezuela since 1985, when he escaped from prison there with the help of the CIA. He was being held at the time for having plotted the 1976 mid-air bombing of a Cuban airliner that killed 73 people.

Depending on his audience, Posada Carriles either denies or coyly affirms the bombing. He is presently being held by federal authorities in El Paso, Texas, for having entered the U.S. illegally in March. His lawyer says Posada Carriles had nothing to do with the bombing of the Cuban plane and is seeking political asylum in the U.S.

However, recently declassified CIA documents made public by the National Security Archives, a project of George Washington University, tell a different story. According to an AP dispatch by Curt Anderson, published June 9 in the Orlando Sun-Sentinel, this long-time CIA employee had actually said that he and others “were going to hit a Cuban airplane.”

The remarks came “following a \$1,100-a-plate fund-raising dinner in Caracas for

Orlando Bosch, a leader of Cuban exiles opposed to the communist government of President Fidel Castro. The CIA document says that during the dinner, Bosch made the comment that his organization was ‘looking good’ after the Sept. 21, 1976, assassination in Washington of former Chilean foreign minister Orlando Letelier and that ‘we are going to try something else.’

The CIA cable continued: “A few days following the fund-raising dinner, Posada was overheard to say that ‘we are going to hit a Cuban airplane’ and that ‘Orlando has the details.’” Of course, the U.S. government never notified Cuba of the plot.

Early this May, the Venezuelan National Assembly passed a resolution calling on the U.S. to fulfill its extradition treaty and send Carriles back to Venezuela. Now the masses are getting involved with this issue, and a delegation headed by Assembly first vice president Ricardo Gutierrez is visiting Washington with the intention of turning over petitions with 50,000 Venezuelan signatures to U.S. authorities.

One of the CIA documents says Bosch was in Venezuela under the protection of former president Carlos Andres Perez. Posada Carriles himself had worked for Venezuelan intelligence.



WW PHOTO: CHERYL LABASH



WW PHOTO: DEIRDRE GRISWOLD

The newly formed Venezuelan Committee for the Extradition of Luis Posada Carriles is calling on the present progressive government of Hugo Chavez to declassify police documents from that period. The head of the committee is Carlos Marrero, who was tortured in the 1970s under the instructions of Posada.

Meanwhile, the court in El Paso on June 13 postponed Posada Carriles’s hearing on political asylum to Aug. 29. His lawyer filed an appeal for a change of venue to Miami—center of the CIA-affiliated Cuban

right-wing.

Outside the El Paso court, and in 10 other U.S. cities, protesters attacked the hypocrisy of the Bush administration on the “terrorism” issue and demanded Posada Carriles’s extradition to Venezuela, which is ready to put him on trial again. The U.S. demonstrations were called by the ANSWER Coalition and endorsed by a large number of other organizations, including the International Action Center and Workers World Party.

Protests have also taken place throughout Latin America and Europe, as well as in the Philippines. Over a million people marched past the U.S. Interests Section in Havana on May 1 demanding justice for the victims of the CIA and its henchmen, like Posada Carriles. □



WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

A tale of two pipelines, part 2

Blood for expensive oil

By Bill Cecil

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times. For Wall Street fat cats and their flunky politicians, it was the spring of hope. For masses of people in Eastern Europe, Asia, Africa and Latin America, it was the winter of despair.

The time was the early 1990s. Washington’s decades-long, \$12-trillion-dollar Cold War had succeeded. The Soviet Union and its vast planned economy had ceased to exist. From Saxony to Sakhalin, across the vast expanse of Eurasia, plants built to produce for use, not profit, closed their doors.

Production dropped by 50 percent. Hundreds of millions of people were plunged into poverty. Life expectancy fell by more than a decade. Infant mortality skyrocketed.

Hunger and disease stalked the land. The suffering was not confined to the former Soviet bloc. Countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America were devastated by the loss of Soviet aid and trade.

For Corporate America, though, it was a bonanza.

Festival of vultures

Wall Street soared as Eastern Europe’s new capitalists poured stolen gains into Western stocks, bonds and real estate. The dollar shot up in value as it became the de facto currency of the former Soviet bloc.

The U.S. share of world industrial production jumped nearly 20 percent—the first big increase since the 1940s. The collapse of Soviet industry left poor countries at the mercy of Wall Street banks and IMF Structural Adjustment Programs.

The collapse of the Soviet military gave the Pentagon a free hand to bomb and invade, from Iraq to Sudan to Yugoslavia. It was a festival of vultures.

President Bill Clinton called the U.S.

economic boom of the 1990s “the longest peacetime expansion ever.” But it was the product of destruction on the scale of a major war.

For the giant oil monopolies, the overthrow of the USSR created an opportunity to grab that country’s vast energy resources. But it posed a problem as well.

The Soviet Union produced more oil and gas than any other country. But most of it was consumed inside the socialist bloc. New capitalist Russia produced much less than the USSR had. But it exported much more, even while many Russians now had no heat in the winter.

Cheap Russian oil and gas flooded world markets. And Russia’s energy industry was closed to outside investment. It was the impoverished country’s chief source of foreign exchange. Even the corrupt Yeltsin regime couldn’t afford to let Western firms take it over.

The regimes in the oil-rich republics of Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan, far from the sea, welcomed U.S. investment. Exxon-Mobil and ChevronTexaco developed fields in Kazakhstan, while BP focused on Azerbaijan’s Apsheron peninsula. Unocal took an interest in Turkmenistan’s natural gas.

Expensive pipelines were planned to bring those resources to faraway ports.

Not the oil, but the profits

Many opponents of Bush’s war in Iraq call it a war for cheap oil. But companies like BP, ExxonMobil and ChevronTexaco are not in business to give people heat and gas. They’re in business to make money—profit, the maximum return on their invested capital.

Their great fear is not an oil shortage but an oil glut—too much oil coming on the market, pushing down prices and profits and the value of their investments.

This may seem contrary to other capi-

alist interests. Oil, however, is central to the world position of U.S. and British monopoly capital. Big Oil is the wealthiest and most powerful section of the U.S. capitalist class. It is closely tied to the biggest banks, which were founded on oil money, finance drilling and exploration, and recycled oil income.

The richest U.S. capitalist dynasties—the Rockefellers and the Morgans—are now united in the JPMorganChase Bank and the ExxonMobil Oil Company.

In 1998 two events rocked the oil industry. The collapse of the Russian ruble, coming on the heels of the East Asian currency crisis, pushed oil prices below \$10 a barrel. And in February 1998 the United Nations authorized Iraq, which had been under U.S./UN sanctions since 1990, to sell its oil directly to foreign buyers.

The Feb. 28, 1998, San Francisco Chronicle warned the UN’s move “would devalue British North Sea oil, undermine American oil production and—much more important—it would destroy the huge profits which the United States stands to gain from its massive investment in Caucasian oil production, especially in Azerbaijan.”

The article was headlined “Iraq Oil Poses Threat to West.”

The Clinton regime, thinking of long-term U.S. corporate interests, begged the oil companies not to drop their pipeline projects. If U.S. firms didn’t grab the region’s resources, someone else would—perhaps Russia or France or China.

Profits came first, however. Unocal dropped its plans to build a natural gas pipeline to the Indian Ocean through Afghanistan. And oil executives told the Clinton regime a pipeline across the Caucasus would not be worth it unless oil rose to \$40 a barrel and stayed there. It seemed like a distant prospect at the time.

Clinton ordered a massive bombing of

Iraq later that year.

Fast forward to 2002. U.S. troops have occupied Afghanistan. The Bush regime is openly preparing to invade Iraq. Oil prices—and oil company profits—spiral upward. The business media calls it the “war premium.”

On Aug. 1, bankers, oil executives and then-U.S. Energy Secretary Spencer Abraham met in London to announce the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline (BTC) would go forward. Construction began on Sept. 18.

Seven months later Bush’s tanks roared across the Iraqi border.

It is now 2005. Iraq is in ruins, with over 100,000 civilians dead. The price of oil has been pushed to around \$50 a barrel. Oil profits are at record highs—ExxonMobil made \$25 billion last year. And Azeri oil is flowing through the Baku pipeline.

CIA-backed coups have changed regimes in Georgia and Ukraine, and U.S. Special Forces are supervising Georgia’s military. In April Donald Rumsfeld visited Baku to seek U.S. military bases on Azeri land. Azerbaijan borders Russia on the north and Iran on the south.

The Pentagon has also allocated \$100 million to organize a force called the Caspian Guard, supposedly to protect BTC and U.S. oil investments in Kazakhstan. Kazakhstan borders Russia and China.

All this accompanies the Bush regime’s growing belligerence toward Iran, Russia and China.

For workers in the U.S., high fuel prices amount to a wage cut. For China, Japan and Western Europe, they mean a big transfer of their wealth to U.S. and British banks and oil companies. For poor oil-importing countries, they mean devastation.

Mass murder in Iraq made BTC profitable. Big Oil and the banks behind it will demand more wars to maintain their rate of profit. They will not stop unless the people stop them. □

Behind the Indigenous-led uprising in Bolivia

By Berta Joubert-Ceci

On the evening of June 9, after three weeks of mass uprising, Bolivian President Carlos Mesa was forced to resign. The president of the Bolivian Supreme Court, Eduardo Rodríguez, replaced him.

The irrepressible force of outrage, pride and the quest to defend natural resources by Bolivia’s Aymaras, Quechuas and Guarani Indigenous population—who went to the capital of La Paz waving their Whiplas liberation flags—has placed this country in the center of Latin America’s revolutionary effervescence.

The Indigenous peoples, together with peasants and workers, have been waging a courageous uprising against U.S. and other foreign transnational corporations. For decades these outside forces have been stealing the country’s natural resources, leaving the Indigenous peoples in the most abject misery.

They also rose up against their own capitalist class, which has been the agent of their subjugation by foreign monopolies.

With the two main demands—nationalize hydrocarbons (natural gas) and convene a Constitutional Assembly—they have been increasingly mobilizing and striking until the country was paralyzed.

Bolivia, with a population of 9 million, is the poorest country in South America. Yet it is rich in natural gas. Bolivia has the second biggest natural-gas reserve in the region, after Venezuela.

In the hands of foreign companies like Repsol, British Petroleum, Total, Enron, Shell, Petrobras and others, this natural wealth has done nothing to improve the quality of life of the masses.

Infant mortality is very high: For every 1,000 live births, 56 babies die. Maternal mortality is 550 per 100,000 live births.

Around 30 percent of the population lives on less than \$1 a day. Poverty and social exclusion hit the Indigenous people hardest. The Indigenous are 62 percent of the population.

The poverty stems from the imperialists stealing resources—through neoliberal, free-market economic policies that were put into place in 1985 to “control” a 24,000% hyperinflation, and through imposition of International Monetary Fund and World Bank requirements. During this time foreign enterprises took over the ownership of Bolivia’s natural gas.

The three traditional parties—the Nationalist Revolutionary Movement (MNR), the Nationalist Democratic Action (ADN) and the Movement of the Revolutionary Left (MIR)—have been sharing power. They have dutifully put these policies into place, to the detriment of the vast majority of the population.

This has created great discontent, and distrust of the ruling class and its parties, among the poorest sector of society.

But Bolivia has also a great and long history of mass political protest. In 1952 a rebellion forced the nationalization of mines and universal suffrage. Most recently, the masses’ militancy prevented foreign capital from taking over control of water resources.

In April 2000 a “Water War” arose in the city of Cochabamba, southeast of La Paz—which prevented U.S.-based Bechtel Corp. from privatizing water.

In January, Indigenous residents of La Paz’s satellite city, El Alto, held militant protests that forced President Mesa’s government to end a contract with the French Lyonnaise des Eaux Co. This firm had been operating in Bolivia since 1997, under the

name “Aguas de Illimani.” It administered water utilities in El Alto, charging exorbitant prices to consumers and denying this vital service altogether to the poorest neighborhoods.

Keep in mind that the U.S.-led World Bank and Interamerican Development Bank are business partners of Aguas—and the force behind the wave of privatization of not only the water services, but all Bolivia’s natural resources and services.

Uprising starts in El Alto

The recent uprising is a step further in the people’s struggle.

It started in mid-May in the city of El Alto. Then resistance spread to the rest of the country.

El Alto is located in the “altiplano” or highland plain, 4,000 meters above sea level. It is a fast-growing city of approximately 1 million people, most of them rural Aymaras. El Alto sits above La Paz, only seven miles away.

This unique topography makes El Alto’s protests highly effective, since it surrounds La Paz Airport and hosts in its center the main road that connects La Paz with the rest of the country.

El Alto began as a shantytown. Unemployed workers would settle there in the hopes of finding work in the capital.

Many were part of the 25,000 Bolivian miners who lost their jobs in the 1980s, when tin mines were shut down after the world price of tin crashed. Aymara Indigenous people and to a lesser degree Quechuas joined the community after being forced off their small farms.

They bring strong organizational skills and traditions. And they share a common experience: They are all victims of Washington’s policy of neoliberalism carried out by the IMF with the help of the local bourgeoisie.

Now El Alto is 90 percent Indigenous. According to research by the Center of Labor and Rural Development Studies in La Paz, 60 percent of the “alteños”—residents of El Alto—live below the poverty level. Of these, 50 percent survive under indigent conditions.

Only 30 percent of the households have basic sewage. Education and health services are extremely poor.

Strong neighborhood committees are the backbone of the Federation of Neighborhood Committees—FEJUVE. This is one of the two main Alto organizations that have played a big role in the mobilizations.

FEJUVE is led by Abel Mamani, but the rank and file are decisive. FEJUVE and the Regional Workers Central—COR, whose executive secretary is Edgar Patana—together form the basis of a coordinating committee that mobilizes the masses.

They were the force behind the recent road blockades and the symbolic takeover of gas plants in El Alto.

In 2003 they initiated and became the center of protests, with shouts of, “El Alto on its feet, never on its knees!” and “Civil war now!”

This was the “Gas War” to defend that reserve and prevent its sale to the North. The rebellion forced the 2003 resignation of President Sanchez de Lozada, a strong U.S. ally. He escaped to the United States after unleashing the police and the military to try to crush the protests.

The repression killed 80 people and wounded 400, many of them alteños. This “Black October” is still vivid in people’s minds. One of the current demands is to prosecute the former president. Sanchez de Lozada still roams free in the terrorist

La Paz, Bolivia
June 6.



sanctuary that is the United States today.

Many other organizations in Bolivia form the resistance along with FEJUVE and the COR. There is no overall political unity yet; some of their specific demands sometimes

even seem in conflict. The great majority, however, share a resistance to neoliberalism and a readiness to take action even in the most trying circumstances.

They all were pressing three major demands: nationalize gas, convene a Constitutional Assembly, and prosecute Sanchez de Lozada and later, dump Mesa, neoliberal head of Senate Hormando Vaca Diez, and Mario Cossio, head of the lower Chamber of Deputies.

Combined action drove out Mesa

The combined national actions of all the opposition groups shut down the country, forced Mesa to resign, and prevented the constitutional presidential succession, which would have been the head of the Senate and then the president of the deputies. These posts were held by the unpopular Vaca Diez and Cossio, who were known participants in the neoliberal program put into place by Sanchez de Lozada. The new president, Eduardo Rodríguez, is the head of the Supreme Court, and as such, the only one who constitutionally can call for early elections.

Some other forces in the uprising are Aymara Deputy Evo Morales and the Movement Toward Socialism, MAS, which holds the second biggest representation in Congress after the traditional parties.

Morales, a coca grower, is well known for his organization’s battle against the eradication of coca in the Chapare region, especially by particularly Washington’s Plan Colombia. The U.S. government has strongly opposed Morales and falsely accuses him of receiving financing from Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez.

The militant miners, who formed the base of the Bolivian Workers Central, COB, are the ones who exploded dynamite caps during the protests. Indigenous and peasant groups from the eastern lowland of Bolivia were also crucial to the struggle.

Santa Cruz: home to the oligarchy

This eastern region of Bolivia is very rich in natural gas. It is also the home of the oligarchy, the white and racist minority population. The residents of the department of Santa Cruz launched a secessionist movement with a demand of autonomy that was supported by the U.S. embassy and the oil transnationals, and by Vaca Diez, who also lives in this region.

The rebellious masses strongly opposed secession. They saw this maneuver as an attempt to oppose the militant struggle for nationalization and steal the country’s natural resources. On June 1, a demonstration voicing the national demands by the Indigenous, peasants and workers from the area was brutally attacked by a paramilitary group of racists, the Santa Cruz Youth Union, shouting racist statements.

After three weeks, the protest that had initially begun in El Alto had extended as a general strike to the rest of the country. It paralyzed the Congress, airport, serv-

ices, transportation, small markets—and in the end it shut down the whole country.

The strike completely blockaded La Paz. It stopped any gas or oil supplies from getting through.

Food began to be scarce, not only in the capital but also in El Alto.

In the final days, the Congress’s deliberation, in an attempt to debate Mesa’s resignation, had to be transferred to Sucre, the constitutional capital, supposedly a quieter city devoid of protesters, southeast of La Paz.

Miner’s death sparks broader revolt

On June 9, Workers World spoke with Bolivian alternative-media reporter and writer Alex Contreras, who was in Sucre. Gasping for air after running from tear gases, he said: “Today Congress was supposed to meet to debate the presidential succession, but at 2:30 this afternoon there was a confrontation where a 52-year-old miner was killed by police. They were mine workers who were coming to Sucre to prevent Vaca Diez from getting elected as president. This has radicalized the actions of the rest of the protesters and they are trying to take over the main plaza where the deliberations are taking place.”

Contreras described how demonstrators had poured in by the thousands from many rural areas when they heard the news of the miner’s death: “There were police and military contingents in roads, the airport and particularly in the Plaza 25 de Mayo where there were hundreds if not thousands of Bolivians on the streets. There is a confrontation with the police...”

At this point, with the noise of shots and dynamite explosions in the background, the telephone connection was broken. WW was able to contact Contreras later and learn that he was not injured.

These developments forced Congress to unanimously approve Mesa’s resignation. Most important, the successors to the presidency, Vaca Diez and Cossio, decided to step aside from the succession.

When Mesa took office in 2003, he was to have carried out the “October Agenda,” the nationalization, which would in fact have been development of the gas industry for the people’s benefit instead of the transnational corporations’. He was also to convene a constitutional assembly where the people could freely choose and plan out the future for their country.

Mesa fulfilled neither of these promises. Confronted soon after taking office by a majority neoliberal Congress and a racist and pro-United States oligarchy that despised and feared the Indigenous population, Mesa vacillated.

In March, a watered-down Gas Law was finally passed. It increased taxes on foreign corporations by 32 percent on top of the previous 18 percent. But it fell short of meeting the people’s demands.

According to the law’s critics, it would

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Michael Jackson: ‘Guilty’ verdict after acquittal?

‘Not guilty.’ The jury representative repeated the word 14 times. And then Michael Jackson was free to leave the Santa Barbara County Courthouse through the front door. People across the country and around the world stopped what they were doing to listen to the stunning verdict. Once the trial ended in acquittal, the court decision became the subject of intense debate.

Those who saw the trial as a vehicle for racism and reaction cheered the verdict.

But others, who saw this as a court case dealing with child sexual abuse, are angry and distraught. Why?

The jurors—not a single Black member among them—were interviewed as a group at length after the trial ended. They spoke sincerely and seriously about how carefully they worked to be objective and how painstakingly they had examined the evidence the prosecutor presented them with. After 14 weeks of hearing evidence and deliberating they explained that they had found no grounds for convicting Jackson on a single major or lesser charge.

Even the capitalist media reports that the belief is widespread that prosecutor Tom “Mad Dog” Sneddon has hounded Jackson for more than a decade as part of a vendetta.

Isn’t the myth of capitalist justice in the United States that a person is “innocent until proven guilty”?

So why did talk show hosts and political pundits race to their bully pulpits to rule Jackson “guilty” or to ridicule and dehumanize him after a jury—which no one could argue was made up of his peers—had carefully weighed the evidence and found him innocent?

It’s because Michael Jackson faced

two trials: one in the court room and the other in the news room. Jackson was ridiculed and dehumanized in the media—and not just the tabloids. The lurid headlines that trumpeted prosecution claims while burying more subdued and smaller items about defense arguments served to win over the “jury” of public opinion. In fact, the media found Jackson guilty before the trial even began.

Once the publicity about the charges facing Jackson exploded into media frenzy, there was little room for news about the Catholic Church hierarchy covering up the sexual abuse of boys and girls, as well as women, within its ranks. Or the sexual violation and rape of youth by Pentagon military recruiters.

Nor did the monopolized media take the opportunity to provide education about the fact that sexual abuse of children is rampant in the U.S. and the preponderance of abusers are heterosexual men.

This trial was never about stopping the sexual abuse of children. It was a forum for racist caricatures of a Black entertainer who has promoted racial unity. And it was a campaign to vilify and portray as less than human a prominent person who does not fit the state-enforced gender roles.

But at least one newspaper got it right: Workers World. The newspaper you are reading takes seriously the struggle to build unity against all forms of capitalist bigotry and divisive ideology.

For earlier Workers World coverage of the Jackson trial, see: “Behind the headlines on Michael Jackson,” www.workers.org/ww/2003/jackson1204.php; and “Michael Jackson in the lion’s den,” www.workers.org/ww/2004/jackson0129.php. □

Behind the Indigenous-led uprising in Bolivia

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still benefit the corporations at the expense of the Bolivian masses. Now the demand is for full nationalization and development of the natural gas for the benefit of the poor majority.

The struggle continues

After Rodriguez was sworn in as president, not all the blockades were lifted. The combative people of El Alto vowed to keep struggling until nationalization is won.

The new president met with the leaders of El Alto for hours, until an agreement was reached. The organizations granted the new government a brief but vigilant truce.

Abel Mamani announced the formation of a joint commission of government and El Alto social organization representatives to make sure that nationalization, a constitutional assembly, and the call for general elections are included in the National Congress’s agenda.

The rebellion in Bolivia has not finished. There is only a temporary truce. Even the combative residents of El Alto were asking their leaders to allow a truce in order to replenish their meager food supplies and feed their children.

But they have no illusions about

Rodriguez or the traditional parties. They confront their bourgeoisie and U.S. imperialism.

Meanwhile, Washington and U.S. corporations are working nonstop with their allies, both internationally and in Bolivia itself.

It was recently reported that the United States and Britain are “pardoning” the debt of 18 of the poorest countries of the world, among them Bolivia. Do they think this is enough to quiet the combative masses there? Will the U.S. companies leave? Pay reparations to the people?

Or do they want a “stable” situation so that the transnational corporations can reap the profits of these countries’ natural resources without any bother?

Imperialism always underestimates people’s movements. The question in Bolivia now is how the Indigenous, workers and peasants can take power. According to Contreras, there are attempts to form a Unitary Committee of Mobilizations among all organizations. He also informed WW that El Alto’s FEJUVE and COR had joined with the Aymaras Peasant Federation of La Paz to create the Popular Assembly of Indigenous People and Workers—and declared El Alto the capital of the Bolivian Revolution of the 21st century. □

Was it ‘fragging’?

G.I. casualties increase in Iraq

By Greg Butterfield

First Lt. Louis Allen and Capt. Philip Esposito, two officers assigned to a New York National Guard unit in Tikrit, Iraq, were killed in their sleep on June 7. The Pentagon is investigating their deaths as a possible “fragging”—an act of retaliation by a rank-and-file soldier or soldiers.

Four explosions destroyed the room where Esposito, a company commander and Wall Street broker, and Allen, the company operations officer and son of a New York City cop, were sleeping in a presidential residence commandeered by the U.S. military. The cause of death was initially reported as “indirect fire” from a mortar attack. But by June 11, the New York Daily News reported, the Pentagon was investigating “suspicious circumstances.”

“We don’t believe their deaths were caused by an enemy combat attack,” an unnamed military source told the Daily News. “We believe there was a crime here.”

Such a “crime,” if it occurred, would mark a qualitative change in the morale of G.I.s in Iraq and the level of resistance within the U.S. military itself.

Fragging of brutal officers was a common form of resistance by soldiers during the Vietnam War. The term came from tossing a fragmentation grenade into a sleeping officer’s tent.

There have been hints and rumors of fraggings in the Iraq War, but only one officially confirmed case. On March 23, 2003, as the 101st Airborne Division was preparing to invade Iraq, Army Sgt. Hasan Akbar carried out a grenade and rifle attack against the 1st Brigade’s senior command staff at Camp Pennsylvania in central Kuwait. Two were killed and 14 wounded.

Akbar, who is Muslim, said he wanted to stop the United States from killing other Muslims. In April of this year, he was convicted by a military jury and sentenced to death.

Acts of resistance

There have been many acts of resistance to the invasion and occupation of Iraq. These range from refusal to ship out or return to combat to the 343rd Quartermaster Company’s en-masse rejection of an October 2004 order to undertake a “suicide mission” with a convoy of fuel trucks.

On June 11, the Pentagon reported that the death toll of U.S. military personnel in Iraq had passed 1,700, including both combat deaths and other causes. At least 25 U.S. soldiers died in the second week of June alone.

This may be just the tip of the iceberg, however. Many independent reports have questioned the U.S. casualty figures, charging that the number of deaths is actually much higher.

Most recently El Diario/La Prensa, a mainstream Spanish-language daily newspaper in New York, reported that its analysis of documents provided to the Puerto Rican government showed that more than 4,000 U.S. troops had been killed by the end of May.

In Iraq, rank-and-file G.I.s and reservists—largely working-class youths and people of color ensnared by the economic draft—are faced with a popular, militant resistance movement that shows

every sign of stepping up its actions in the weeks and months to come. They know they are unwelcome and unwanted by the Iraqi masses.

Popular anger and resistance will only grow as the Pentagon continues to carry out acts of terror against the population, like “Operation Lightning.” This operation has rounded up more than 1,300 men between the ages of 15 and 55 in the Baghdad region as “suspected insurgents.”

On June 12, U.S. forces carried out air strikes against supposed resistance targets in Karabilah. The Pentagon claimed to have killed 40 guerrillas. But residents told Reuters that civilian homes and buildings were the only targets.

Hamdi al-Alusi, chief of Qaim hospital, said he had treated three civilians wounded in the attack—including a 12-year-old boy who later died.

Even senior U.S. military brass like Maj. Gen. Joseph Taluto are now going on record to say that “good and honest” Iraqis are fighting the occupation, as he recently told Gulf News. Brig. Gen. Donald Alston, the chief U.S. military spokesperson in Iraq, admitted that “there is no long-term military solution to an insurgency.” (Knight Ridder, June 12)

Of course, these statements are aimed at luring some sectors of the resistance to abandon the armed struggle and join the U.S.-dominated “political process.” But they can’t help but have an effect on the rank-and-file troops, who were told the exact opposite for the last two-plus years.

By now all G.I.s are aware of the unpopularity of the occupation around the globe and at home. A USA Today/Gallup poll published June 13 showed that 59 percent of U.S. respondents want the troops withdrawn—a record high.

No military censorship can stop the snowballing revelations of Washington’s wrongdoing from reaching their ears: how the Bush administration and its allies deliberately lied about “weapons of mass destruction” and carried out illegal activities to justify the brutal invasion of a sovereign country.

The revelations keep on coming. On June 12, the Sunday Times of London reported on a leaked briefing paper from Prime Minister Tony Blair’s cabinet. Dated July 23, 2002, the briefing paper stated that Britain was committed to backing U.S. military action against Iraq. Since regime change was illegal under international law, the paper noted, it was “necessary to create the conditions” to make it legal by backing Baghdad into a corner using the pretext of United Nations weapons inspections.

Even the likes of right-wing Rep. Walter Jones—infamous for his bid to rename French fries as “freedom fries”—are calling on the Bush administration to set a timetable for withdrawing the troops. The White House pooh-poohed this latest call. (French Press Agency, June 13)

In the midst of this hated occupation, it’s conceivable that more acts of resistance of all kinds by G.I.s are going unreported or underreported.

For example, few in the United States will have heard that another mysterious non-combat death—of Staff Sgt. Mark O. Edwards of Tennessee on June 9—is under investigation. (Big News Network, June 11) □

U.S. corporations sued over Agent Orange

How the Pentagon used WMDs in Vietnam

By Paddy Colligan and G. Dunkel

On April 30, 1975, U.S. imperialism suffered its sharpest, most stunning defeat of the last century. Its “advisers” and “diplomats” in Saigon fled in desperation onto helicopters that took them away to ships waiting in the South China Sea.

Between the military reverses of its South Vietnamese puppets and the fierce and rising resistance at home, the United States had to give up. For the Vietnamese people, the year 1975 was the end of 35 years of warfare.

But this didn’t end the ravages of war for the Vietnamese people. Among the worst was widespread poisoning by the dioxins included in herbicides.

Nor did it end their struggle to gain resources to combat these ravages. These efforts have included a lawsuit in U.S. courts for damages from dioxins used during the war.

The United States had devoted immense financial and human resources to prosecuting this war against the Vietnamese people. The most pernicious weapon the Pentagon used in Vietnam was herbicides.

Recent estimates of the number of people exposed to herbicides in Vietnam between 1961 and 1971 oscillate between 2.1 and 4.8 million, spread over 20,500 villages.

The puppet South Vietnamese regime sprayed between 1971, when the United States was forced to stop, and 1975, when their government collapsed. This regime kept no records. Approximately 18,000,000 gallons of these poisons were used.

The U.S. Armed Forces used 15.5 million tons of air and ground munitions in the war. That is about 9 million more tons than it used in World War II.

These munitions left approximately 26 million craters in the soil of Vietnam, including 21 million in the South. They of course destroyed bridges, roads, schools, hospitals, dikes and canals, as well as killing massive numbers of civilians and soldiers.

The munitions that didn’t explode on impact are still killing people, over 30 years since they were expended.

The United States spent roughly \$300 billion to \$900 billion on the war, counting all the indirect costs like interest and veteran benefits. This is about the same as it spent on World War II, which involved dozens of countries.

The United States has provided no recovery aid to Vietnam since 1975. U.S. veteran groups have provided some assis-

tance on a people-to-people level.

The human costs of the war were very high. Some 2.2 million Indochinese people died, including over 1.9 million Vietnamese, 200,000 Cambodians and 100,000 Laotians. The war left from 3 to 5 million Indochinese either wounded or infirm.

Some 58,151 U.S. soldiers died, along with 5,000 soldiers from U.S. allies. (From Indochina Newsletter, Asia Resource Center, Special Issue 93-97—The ABC’s of the Vietnam War.)

Consequences of chemical warfare

Three generations of Vietnamese have carried the consequences of chemical warfare—which is what spraying herbicides really is—in their flesh and genes.

Vietnam still has hospitals devoted to treating children born without limbs or with severe neurological impairments.

Most of these children are born in areas where there was heavy spraying of these herbicides, variously called Agent Orange, Agent Blue, Agent White, depending on the color of their containers.

The most dangerous component of these herbicides was an industrial chemical known as dioxin, which is a byproduct of the production of many chemicals in industrial societies.

More than 20 years ago, U.S. veterans who were involved in distributing these herbicides sued the manufacturers of Agent Orange, which settled out of court for \$180 million. Given the magnitude of the suffering and disabilities of these vets, which ranged from cancer to diabetes, and the number involved, this really wasn’t much money.

Later, however, Adm. Elmo Zumwalt’s son died of cancer, probably due to his exposure to Agent Orange in Vietnam, and his grandson was born with neurological problems. Zumwalt had been chief of naval operations from 1970 to 1974, after heading U.S. naval forces in Vietnam and personally ordering the herbicide spraying that afflicted his son.

Zumwalt campaigned to get Congress to investigate the dangers of dioxin, which led to further funds being released to aid veterans. It did nothing for the Vietnamese he poisoned.

Vietnamese begin mass campaign

In 2003, the Vietnam Association for Victims of Agent Orange was formed. VAVA began a mass campaign to collect funds and support for a U.S. lawsuit against the Agent Orange manufacturers.

It quickly got over 8 million signatures and in early 2005 brought its case in a Brooklyn federal court.

The U.S. government compensates those who develop a number of specific conditions, including spina bifida in the children of veterans. But in March, Judge Jack Weinstein ruled that as defense contractors, the Agent Orange firms could not be held liable for the decision of the U.S. government, which has sovereign immunity, to use the defoliants.

Weinstein also ruled that international agreements in force at the time did not cover the herbicides, as they should not be considered poisons.

Professor Dr. Hoang Dinh Cau, former chair of the Viet Nam Committee for Investigation of the Consequences of the U.S. Chemical War in Viet Nam, told the Vietnamese News Agency that the court’s decision had denied scientific evidence that was all too clear about the consequences of Agent Orange. The United States has turned its back on the truth in saying that no chemical war happened in Vietnam.

He also quoted a recent document published by the U.S. Academy of Science that the Ranch Hand operation—the Pentagon’s name for the spreading of herbi-

cide— had destroyed some 40 percent of Vietnam’s mangrove forests, deprived local people of conditions to earn their living, and brought about drastic changes in coastal areas. He said that even now, 30 years after the U.S. bombing, what remains in many localities are just bare hills and degraded soil.

VAVA intends to appeal the U.S. court decision, which it finds faulty on both scientific and legal grounds. The Vietnam Agent Orange Relief and Responsibility Campaign has announced plans for Fall 2005 to conduct a U.S. speaking tour of representatives of VAVA and other Agent Orange victims.

When details of the trip are known, they will be announced on www.vn-agentorange.org

- Sources:
1. A very significant book, “Agent Orange: Yesterday’s crime, today’s tragedy,” published in French in February 2005 by the French-Vietnamese Friendship Association. An English edition is expected.
 2. vned.free.fr/actualites.php?r=0, the French website of “The children of dioxin in Vietnam,” has a number of reports in English.
 3. www.aafv.org/index1.htm, which is part of the French-Vietnamese Friendship association, has a good list of sites in French, English and Vietnamese on Agent Orange and a number of other issues.

Hints that U.S. Marines to return to Haiti

By G. Dunkel

On June 3-5 the Haitian National Police (PNH) attacked Bélair, a poor neighborhood in the capital city of Port-au-Prince. During these three days, according to the June 8 issue of Haïti-Progrès, 25 bodies with bullet wounds were taken to the morgue. Dozens of houses were burned.

A unit of Chinese police serving in Haiti under United Nations command joined the PNH in this action.

The official story is that this was an operation against armed “gangs” who burned down a market called Boeuf Tete May 31, killing eight people and destroying a lot of goods and property owned by some of the big businesses in Port-au-Prince.

The people of Bélair responded to this official story that any armed gang would have pulled up stakes and split once they saw the cops massing. But the people who live in Bélair with their families stayed. Where else could they go?

One of them told Haïti-Progrès: “The police know this very well. But their objective in attacking all the people is to empty the poor neighborhoods in consideration [of] an election which is currently making no progress.”

U.S. Ambassador James Foley has been pushing for elections in October and November. But people in Haiti are not registering to vote. Only 25 percent of the registration offices are open; only 100,000 out of a potential electorate of 4.5 million have signed up.

At this rate, it will be 2007 or 2008 until the voter roles are full enough for a valid election to be held.

The poor neighborhoods of Port-au-Prince are the most fervent and committed supporters of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, currently in exile in South Africa.

Foley and his boss Assistant Secretary of State Roger F. Noriega are officially silent about reports that the ambassador has called for a brigade of U.S. Marines to be sent.

But the June 5 Washington Post endorsed the idea, writing: “If Haiti is to be secured or is to hold a democratic election, it will need the help of at least a few hundred American fighters. The sooner they go, the easier their task will be.”


U.S. imperialism’s answer to the crisis it caused in Haiti by backing a coup and kidnapping President Aristide in February 2004 was to apply force, with the help of France and Canada. Its solution to the stubborn, mass resistance that has stalemated its puppets in Port-au-Prince is to apply more force.

This will increase the misery but also the anger of the Haitian people. As Washington is finding out in Iraq, force is not enough. □

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Posada Carriles y el asesinato de Kennedy

Por Deirdre Griswold*

El caso de Luis Posada Carriles, conocido terrorista que las autoridades del gobierno de los Estados Unidos han rehusado extraditar a Venezuela, penetra en el oscuro mundo de las acciones encubiertas de la CIA, especialmente en contra de la Revolución Cubana.

También hay evidencias de que Posada Carriles estaba conectado con el asesinato del Presidente John F. Kennedy, y que estuvo en la Plaza Dealey de Dallas el día del asesinato.

Posada Carriles pasó nueve años encarcelado en Venezuela por haber sido el autor intelectual del estallido de una bomba en un avión de una aerolínea civil cubana mientras volaba hacia Venezuela en 1976, matando a las 73 personas abordo. Se sabe que la CIA sobornó a guardias penales venezolanos para lograr su escape en 1985. Ese fue el año en que George H.W. Bush se hizo jefe de la CIA. Uno de los guardias, ahora jubilado, recientemente describió esos esfuerzos de parte de la CIA en la televisión venezolana.

Posada Carriles también fue detenido, acusado y condenado en Panamá en el 2000 por haber entrado al país con la intención de asesinar al presidente cubano Fidel Castro, que asistía a una cumbre ibero-americana. Pero la Presidenta Mireya Moscoso, en uno de sus últimos actos en la presidencia, perdonó a Posada Carriles y a otros tres terroristas convictos después de que habían pasado sólo un año en prisión.

Moscoso es parte del antiguo establecimiento político que regresó al poder en Panamá luego de que los EEUU, bajo al mando del mismo George H.W. Bush, para entonces presidente, invadiera al país en 1989. Ella pasó muchos años en Miami, donde tenía relaciones estrechas con líderes de la comunidad de cubanos exiliados que han colaborado con la CIA desde la victoria de la Revolución Cubana.

La popularidad de Moscoso en la presidencia de Panamá cayó al punto más bajo que la de cualquier presidente panameño, y ahora está enfrentando cargos de corrupción. Ella regaló a todos legisladores panameños lujosos relojes Cartier y otros artículos de joyería poco antes de un voto sobre el presupuesto del gobierno. Su secretaria admite haber tenido una congeladora llena de miles de dólares en efectivo. Sin embargo, esta amiga de la pandilla de exiliados en Miami dice que es Fidel Castro quien está detrás de las acusaciones de corrupción. (Diccionario de Figuras Políticas)

Hasta el Congreso notó una conspiración

La conexión entre exiliados cubanos contrarrevolucionarios, la CIA y figuras del crimen organizado en el asesinato de Kennedy ha sido conocida por mucho tiempo. A pesar de que la posición oficial del gobierno de los EEUU permanece que Lee Harvey Oswald fue el único asesino, la mayoría del pueblo aquí y alrededor del mundo rechaza esa conclusión. Y la única investigación hecha por el Congreso, por

el Comité Especial de la Casa de Representantes sobre Asesinatos, concluyó en su reporte final que “el Presidente John F. Kennedy fue probablemente asesinado como resultado de una conspiración”.

Sin embargo, a pesar de toda la evidencia que señala la participación de derechistas, especialmente los que responsabilizaron a Kennedy por el fracaso de la invasión de Playa Girón, los medios de comunicación corporativos siguen burlándose de los “teóricos de conspiración”. Ellos citan a la Comisión Warren como la máxima autoridad, una comisión que incluyó al ex director de la CIA, Allen Dulles, el arquitecto de la invasión de Playa Girón en 1961.

Muchos académicos han investigado el papel jugado por la Operación 40 en el asesinato de Kennedy. La Operación 40 era un grupo especial dentro de la CIA establecido con la autorización del Consejo Nacional de Seguridad poco antes de la invasión de Playa Girón. El historiador Arthur Schlesinger lo mencionó en un memorando de junio 1961 a Richard Goodwin: “La supuesta meta de la Operación 40 era la de gobernar territorios liberados en Cuba. Pero el agente encargado de la CIA, un hombre conocido como Félix, entrenó a los miembros del grupo en las técnicas de interrogación de tercer grado, tortura y terrorismo general”.

Ese hombre encargado era Félix Rodríguez, quien en 1967 encabezó el

escuadrón de la CIA que capturó y asesinó a Che Guevara en Bolivia. El tomó el reloj Rolex del Che, y después lo mostró orgullosamente a los periodistas. Su casa en Miami está decorada con fotos suyas junto a George H.W. Bush.

La imagen de Posada Carriles en Cuba

El General Fabián Escalante, ex jefe del contraespionaje cubano, es el autor de “La Guerra Secreta: Operaciones Encubiertas de la CIA Contra Cuba, 1959-1962”, y “El Complot”, los dos publicados [en inglés] por Ocean Press. En mayo de este año, el General Escalante habló con el periodista Jean-Guy Allard sobre el papel de Posada Carriles en la Operación 40 y el asesinato de Kennedy.

“¿Quiénes en 1963 tenían los recursos para asesinar a Kennedy? ¿Quiénes tenían los medios y quiénes tenían los motivos para asesinar al presidente de los EEUU?” preguntó Escalante. “Agentes de la CIA de la Operación 40 quienes estaban vehementemente contra Kennedy. Y entre ellos estaban Orlando Bosch, Luis Posada Carriles, Antonio Veciana y Félix Rodríguez Mendigutía”.

El testimonio de Chauncey Holt, un agente auto declarado de la CIA y socio del crimen organizado concurre con esto. En una entrevista video grabada poco antes de su fallecimiento, Holt identificó a Posada Carriles como uno de los cubanos

exiliados que se encontraba en la Plaza Dealey en el momento del asesinato de Kennedy.

En su entrevista con Allard, Escalante detalló las muchas operaciones de la CIA en Latinoamérica en las que participaron cubanos de ese mismo grupo, originalmente entrenado por la CIA para la invasión de Playa Girón. Estas incluyen el golpe de estado contra el gobierno del Presidente Salvador Allende en Chile y subsiguientemente el asesinato en Washington del ex embajador chileno, Orlando Letelier, así como la guerra de los Contras que asedió a los Sandinistas en Nicaragua.

Bush, Goss y la Operación 40

En opinión de Escalante, eran los miembros de la Operación 40 quienes tenían el entrenamiento y la habilidad de puntería certera necesarios para llevar a cabo el asesinato de Kennedy. El jefe de contraespionaje cubano identificó a los estadounidenses en el grupo como David Morales, David Phillips, E. Howard Hunt, William Harvey, Frank Sturgis, Gerry Hemming, John Rosselli “quien era el segundo comandante de la mafia de Chicago para esa época en el ‘62,” y Porter Goss. Goss es el director actual de la CIA, nombrado por George W. Bush, hijo del anterior director de la CIA.

En “Deadly Secrets” (“Secretos fatales”), los escritores Warren Hinkle y William Turner identificaron a Rafael ‘Chi Chi’ Quintero, Luis Posada Carriles, Félix Rodríguez y Frank Sturgis como miembros de la Operación 40, bajo el control general de E. Howard Hunt. Hunt y Sturgis estuvieron luego en prisión por el robo de Watergate y se cree que los dos estuvieron en Dallas el día en que fue asesinado Kennedy.

Las mismas figuras aparecen una y otra vez, cometiendo actos criminales, asesinatos y sabotaje para mantener a los países latinoamericanos bajo el control de los intereses de compañías estadounidenses. Y las mismas figuras políticas importantes en los Estados Unidos — con la familia Bush encabezando la lista — son sus patrocinadores y protectores.

Hoy todo el mundo está observando cómo el gobierno estadounidense, que ha usado el grito de “terrorismo” para iniciar dos guerras sangrientas y para encarcelar, torturar y asesinar a cantidades innumerables de personas árabes y musulmanas, trata de resolver qué hacer con Posada Carriles. Él es un comprobado terrorista que en dos ocasiones ha sido soltado de la cárcel y protegido por el gobierno invisible de este país, la llamada comunidad de espionaje. Él es más que una vergüenza para la administración de Bush.

Una cosa es segura: la administración estadounidense jamás dejará que él sea cuestionado en un foro abierto sobre sus actividades donde podría implicar a miembros claves de la clase dominante estadounidense y sus operativos políticos.

**Griswold fue directora ejecutiva del Comité de Investigación por Ciudadanos, el cuál llevó a cabo una investigación independiente del asesinato de Kennedy durante los años de 60. □*

